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October 16, 2016

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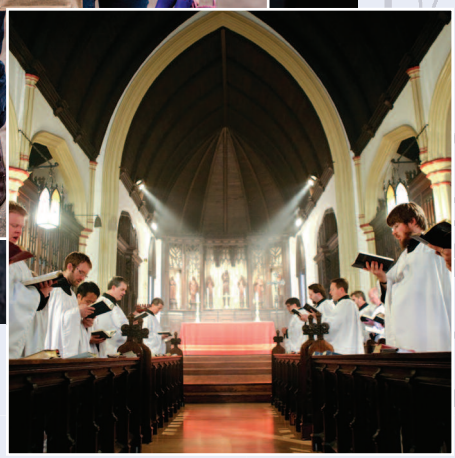

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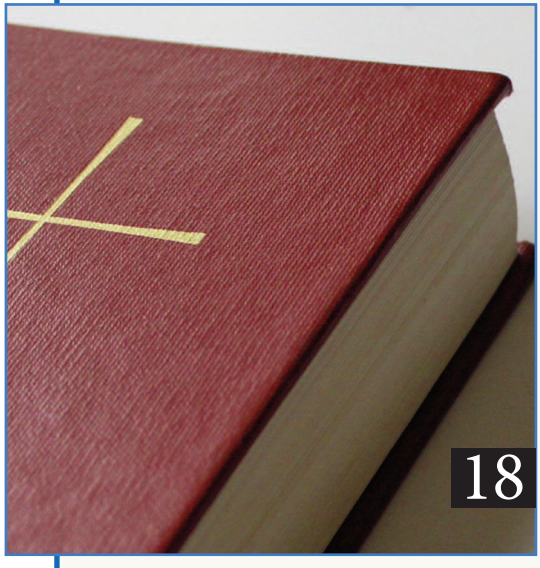
## ON THE COVER

Sarah Hinlicky Wilson: "Probably the first thing you are supposed to notice when you visit a church is its theology as enacted in liturgy, hymns, and preaching. But the first thing we noticed was that it was not a monochrome congregation" (see "The Acts of St. Alban's in Strasbourg," p. 14).



# The Living Church

THIS ISSUE | October 16, 2016


## NEWS



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Living Church Partners

We are grateful to Cathedral Church of the Advent, Birmingham [p. 25], the Episcopal Church Foundation [p. 27], Good Shepherd Church, Dallas, and Christ Church, Georgetown [p. 28], whose generous support helped make this issue possible.



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In the Episcopal Church

# 'Fear, Mistrust, Resentment' at 815

The Episcopal Church Center has a workplace culture marked by "fear, mistrust, and resentment," according to staff and directors who answered a survey in the wake of a misconduct scandal and two high-level firings.

In the survey, released Sept. 15 at the House of Bishops meeting in Detroit, employees said they face expectations to avoid confrontation, withhold input, and strive to make good impressions, rather than do what's right. Another theme: staff find it difficult to maintain personal integrity while working for the national church.

"I'm not sure I found a sadder finding, except for the score on people not feeling that they were well-respected," said the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the House of Deputies.

815 Second Avenue in New York City

Consultants from Human Synergistics, a human resources firm, shared the results with bishops gathered for their fall meeting and with members of the House of Deputies, who tuned in via webcast. Presenters laid bare how the workplace culture at 815 Second Avenue in New York City is exactly opposite of the collaborative, constructive one the employees say they want.

"This is tough stuff," said Tim Kuppler, director of culture and organization development at the consultancy. "These are the things standing in the way of accomplishing what we're talking about with the Jesus Movement."

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry brought in Human Synergistics after an independent, four-month investigation found misconduct by two senior administrators, Sam McDonald and Alex Baumgarten, had gone unaddressed before Bishop Curry took office on Nov. 1, 2015. McDonald and Baumgarten were fired in April, and the nature of the misconduct has not been disclosed.

In announcing the firings, Curry said the work ahead "is not primarily organizational and structural, but deeply cultural and spiritual." The survey begins a retraining process that will include every employee of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society.

Survey results pointed to dynamics in which misconduct and other misbehavior could fester. Staff said, for instance, that when they have concerns, they're expected to keep those to themselves and not speak up.

For his part, Curry sought to reassure bishops and deputies that their church's staff problems do not make it an outlier.

"The Episcopal Church is no different than any other church, all right? — so don't get depressed," Curry said. "Christianity is dysfunctional. That's just the name of the game. I mean, it's called being human. How do we get from where we are to where Jesus the Christ is actually calling us to be?"

Consultants also reassured church leaders that an organization's culture can change. Staff, supervisors, and executives will be encouraged to adopt behaviors that show respect and help achieve the culture they say they want.

Resolving to do better has already begun. President Jennings said the officers — Curry, Jennings, General Convention Executive Secretary Michael Barlowe, and Treasurer Kurt Barnes — along with three canons to the presiding bishop have made a series of commitments to one another. Among the pledges: to make decisions by consensus.

"We have committed to one another and to those with whom we work to find healthy, productive, frankly nonthreatening ways to deal with those times when we are in conflict or disagree with one another," Jennings said. "Disagreement is one of the ways that we can experience resurrection and new life."

Last spring, an independent audit found the Episcopal Church needs new policies and procedures in order to protect whistleblowers. In Thursday's two-hour session, none of the speakers mentioned misconduct or how a reformed culture might include new whistleblowing safeguards.

*G. Jeffrey MacDonald*

Analysis

# Gradual Decline Continues

The numbers are in, and the Episcopal Church continues its decline. On Sept. 23, the church released its annual report on parochial and diocesan data, showing a 2 percent decline in membership and a 3.2 percent decline in attendance across the church.

Brief commentary from Kirk Hadaway, congregational research officer, provided some context and clarity: 39,000 members left the church while, on average, parishioners gave more than they did last year.

With the release of the data came headlines of "relentless decline," "alarming decline," "uninterrupted decline." While different interpretations of the decline swirl around news and social media, it may be easy for people in the pews to conclude that the loss of members in the church is inexorable: that which cannot be prayed away.

The data clearly show decline. A peek at statistics across the last decade indicates, for the most part, an outward trickle of members punctuated by larger losses here and there. There are outliers (in which data do not look much like the rest): the Convocation of European Churches lost 21 percent of its membership last year and the Virgin Islands lost more than 41 percent of its membership in the past decade. Pittsburgh — the birthplace of what became the Anglican Church in North America— lost more than 56 percent of its membership in the past decade, but most of that was recorded in 2009, during the split. Since then, membership has been flat.

Likewise, there are outliers for growth or remaining flat. The Diocese of North Dakota has shown very modest growth in the last decade and about 1 percent growth in the past year. Alabama has declined by around 3 percent in the last decade but was flat last year. Lexington grew by 1.7 percent in the past year. And after years of decline, Hawaii saw 1 percent growth last year. Outside of the United States, the small Diocese of Venezuela has grown from almost 700 to more than 1,000 members in the last year.

Numbers for average Sunday attendance tell a story of slightly deeper decline, while increased giving suggests more dedication among the members who remain. While all of these categories have outliers, the overall trend is a steady, gentle decline in the church. Since 2005, membership saw an average 2 percent decline every year, with little change in that average from year to year. In a decade, that adds up to the 19.2 percent decline recorded. Attendance shows a similar trend, with around 3 percent declines recorded most years. Donations gathered by

(Continued on next page)

## Gradual Decline Continues

(Continued from previous page)

pledge and plate showed a little more variability, but again, the average since 2010 has been around two thirds of a percent increase year over year.

This paints a portrait of a church with steadily receding membership and attendance, offset by modest gains in stewardship. As with the economy, extended years of recession generally mount into a depression. After many years of this decline, it is safe to declare that the Episcopal Church, like other mainline denominations, is in a membership depression. In most places in the church, the deepening of this depression is not accelerating. Contrary to some headlines, most places in the church should neither be sounding alarms nor pronouncing the end times. They are seeing a continuation of a sad trend that has been going on for some time. And for dioceses like Alabama and Hawaii, the decline has indeed been interrupted.

Interpreting data is no easy task. In *Failure of Nerve*, leadership guru and rabbi Edwin Freidman pointed out that data often drive leadership choices, not through understanding "the big picture" but by way of anxiety about the numbers. He argued that data could be highly addictive, skewing us toward "self-doubt, denial, temptation, relapse, and withdrawal" as we collect, analyze, and lament figures.

Data can reveal a lot, but numbers about the church are an incredibly brief summary of myriad complex interactions occurring on the ground in parishes and dioceses. Why have some dioceses grown or stayed flat? Why, really, has giving increased? Who has joined the church even as others have left? How do local economies affect church membership in certain regions? There are many questions to ask, and yet the data can only tell us so much. There is certainly more to learn, to collect, to cross-reference, and to understand.

Yet, before the church dives deeper into understanding, excusing, downplaying, or celebrating the numbers, prayer could be a useful next step. The church may be losing 2 percent of its membership every year, but is that inexorable?

*Matt Townsend*

# Refugee Decision Draws Outcry

A decision by Texas Governor Greg Abbott to withdraw from the federal refugee resettlement program prompted a quick response from Episcopal Migration Ministries and the bishops of Texas.

"Through the history of the United States, refugees have enriched our communities as creators, business owners, students, and friends," the Rev. Canon E. Mark Stevenson, director of EMM, said in a statement on Sept. 21. "Our nation, and indeed our church, has been enhanced by contributions from refugees that have sought safety and opportunity in this land. We know this to be true from decades of ministry walking with refugees and migrants."

The Texas governor's statement said the refugee settlement program is "riddled with serious problems" that threaten the United States.

"Empathy must be balanced with security," Abbott wrote. "Texas has done more than its fair share in aiding refugees, accepting more refugees than any other state between October 2015 and March 2016. While many refugees pose no danger, some pose grave danger, like the Iraqi refugee with ties to ISIS who was arrested earlier this year after he plotted to set off bombs at two malls in Houston.

"Despite multiple requests by the State of Texas, the federal government lacks the capability or the will to distinguish the dangerous from the harmless, and Texas will not be an accomplice to such dereliction of duty to the American people. Therefore, Texas will withdraw from the refugee resettlement program."

The bishops of Texas also issued a statement denouncing Abbott's announcement.

Signed by bishops in the dioceses of Texas, the Rio Grande, West Texas, Northwest Texas, Fort Worth, and Dallas, the statement expressed concern about Abbott's decision and affirmed the role of Christian churches in aiding refugees. They asserted that Texans are not fearful of refugees and are known for hospitality — "'Texas' means friendship" to those in need.

"Texas leads the nation in refugee resettlement, and a decision to pull out of the refugee resettlement program after nearly 40 years of peaceful participation is inconsistent with our proud history of welcoming refugees," the bishops said. "More than that, as Christians, we follow a Lord who calls us to care for those who suffer and to show our love for God by loving our neighbor."

The bishops said Abbott's decision "reacts fearfully and broadly against the wrong people, most of whom have given up everything to escape violence and terror and find freedom among us."

They added: "This decision does not reflect the overwhelmingly welcoming spirit from faith and community partners across Texas. Every day we see Texans practicing their commitment to courage and hospitality by welcoming refugee families and helping them become Texans and Americans."

# Presiding Bishop Visits Standing Rock

In a show of support and advocacy, Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael Curry visited Standing Rock Sioux Nation Sept. 24-25.

During his visit, Curry was scheduled to tour Standing Rock with the Rt. Rev. John Tarrant, bishop of South

(Continued on page 8)

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## PB Visits Standing Rock

(Continued from page 6)

Dakota, to visit the Camp of Sacred Stones, and to lead a public forum at the camp.

In a video posted by Episcopal News Service, Curry told gathered protestors that Standing Rock might be a new Selma. "This may well be the moment when nations come together, when peoples of goodwill come together to transform this world from the nightmare that it often is into the dream that God intends so that clean water is available to everybody, so that every man, woman and child knows the peace and the goodness that God intends for us all," he said.

*Office of Public Affairs*

## In the Anglican Communion

Postcard from London

# More Sex, Please, We're Media

While the so-called silly season is behind us, one topic (sex) continues to claim religion headlines in the U.K. The latest development was the announcement Sept. 15 that a team of 10 bishops will shape a response of the College of Bishops following an almost two-year process of shared conversations about same-sex relations.

The group, to be chaired by the Rt. Rev. Graham James, Bishop of Norwich, includes three women: the Rt. Rev. Libby Lane, Bishop of Stockport; the Rt. Rev. Sarah Mullally, Bishop of Crediton; and the Rt. Rev. Jo Wells, Bishop of Dorking, who took up her role only last week.

Observers believe the group is weighted in a conservative direction. It includes a traditionalist, the Rt. Rev. Jonathan Goodall, Bishop of Ebbsfleet, and a conservative evangelical, the Rt. Rev. Rod Thomas, Bishop of Maidstone.

Gay activists sharply criticized its composition. Jayne Ozanne, a General Synod member, expressed dismay and told *The Telegraph*: "Yet again the Church of England is talking about us without us."

Others were more sanguine. Canon Rosie Harper, who takes a liberal stance, believes change will come. "It is quite conservative but these are the people that they've got to get on board," she told *The Telegraph*. "You can't not have Rod Thomas."

Over the border in Wales, at the meeting of the Governing Body at his final presidential address Sept. 14, the Most Rev. Barry Morgan focused on sexuality. Morgan said it was not possible to argue that there is one settled understanding of what the Bible says on sexuality, that Church attitudes on slavery had changed, and that the same could happen on sexuality.

This drew a sharp response from the Rev Ian Paul, a member of the Archbishops Council of the Church of England: "Very many scholars of the Bible, including those who do not agree with the Church's traditional teaching on sexuality, would be astonished by his statement that 'the Bible has more than one view on homosexuality.' The few texts that are directly relevant are uniformly negative."

During the weekend of Sept. 2-4, *The Guardian* grabbed headlines when the Rt. Rev. Nicholas Chamberlain, Bishop of Grantham, was the first Church of England bishop to "publicly declare that he is gay and in a relationship." In the U.K. it is illegal for the media to "out" an individual. In this instance Chamberlain effectively outed himself by confirming the story when a Sunday newspaper threatened to expose him.

How did this story emerge? My reading is that it connects to an earlier *Guardian* story about the expected letter by gay clergy declaring they were in gay marriages and urging the church to change its teaching (TLC, Aug. 12).

The advance spin heralded something groundbreaking. It was hardly that. Just eight clergy and their spouses signed the letter. Six others indicated support but declined to be named. Four had already acknowledged their relationships. One has not held a license for a decade; one is retired; one is in academia; and one is an incumbent about to retire.

Ahead of sending the letter, as its authors tried to build up the story in conversations with journalists, the situation of the Bishop of Grantham arose. Framers of the letter hoped that Chamberlain would join their campaign. It did not turn out that way.

Chamberlain told *The Guardian* he did not want to become known as "the gay bishop" but that he hoped to be "a standard-bearer for all people as a gay man. And I really hope that I'll be able to help us move on beyond matters of sexuality."

For some time now the Church of England has agreed that same-sex attraction is not a barrier to being ordained to the priesthood or episcopate. A 2007 General Synod motion stated that "Homosexual orientation in itself is no bar to a faithful Christian life or to full participation in lay and ordained ministry in the Church."

Arguably this was a non-story. Chamberlain lives alone. He has a male partner but maintains the relationship is celibate. Chamberlain told *The Guardian* he adhered to church guidelines, under which gay clergy must be celibate and are not permitted to marry.

"We explored what it would mean for me as a bishop to be living within those guidelines," he said of discussions leading to his appointment. "People know I'm gay, but it's not the first thing I'd say to anyone. Sexuality is part of who I am, but it's my ministry that I want to focus on."

Archbishop Welby said: "His appointment as bishop of Grantham was made on the basis of his skills and calling to serve the Church in the Diocese of Lincoln. He lives within the bishops' guidelines and his sexuality is completely irrelevant to his office."

*John Martin*

Bishop John Osmers (back row) among students at St. John's Anglican Seminary in Kitwe, Zambia

# Bishop with a Refugee's Spirit

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Rt. Rev. John Osmers served as a chaplain to exiled South African anti-apartheid activists. Today, he is among the leading advocates for Zambia's 6,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees, who still wait to be fully integrated into Zambian society after fleeing their country's genocide in 1994.

Osmers, the retired Anglican Bishop of Eastern Zambia and a native of New Zealand, has lived and worked in Africa for about 50 years.

"When you've had my experiences, you feel quite close to refugees," Osmers said.

Based in Lusaka, Osmers works tirelessly, writing articles in the Zambian press and meeting with government officials and embassy staff. His goal is securing local integration status for the refugees, a provision under Zambian law that would allow them to own land and enjoy freedom of movement and employment. Local integration would give the Rwandans a permanent place in a nation that has long prided itself on offering political asylum to fellow Africans fighting for justice.

The push for local integration has come to what Osmers calls a "painful impasse" in the last several years. In 2013 the United Nations High Commission for Refugees officially declared it safe for refugees to return to Rwanda. Under Zambian law, refugees who wish to stay in the country need to obtain passports from their home countries, and the Rwandan government has refused to grant these. Among Rwandans living in Zambia, there are widespread fears of forced repatriation to a country where they still expect to face discrimination and violence.

Bishop Osmers sees strong connections between the current situation faced by the refugees and his past struggles against South Africa's brutal apartheid regime. "I've been seeing very, very close parallels between the oppression of the white apartheid state on the black population with the Rwandan situation, where you have a minority Tutsi ruling with very tight control over the Hutu," he said. "They have very, very little freedom in terms of participation or access to employment and a better standard of life."

Osmers believes the Rwandan government is deploying agents inside Zambia to silence refugee activists, some of whom are highly educated and represent a credible political threat.

(Continued on next page)

## Bishop with a Refugee's Spirit

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Osmers said he has been targeted.

"We've even been seeing acts of repression, even outside Rwanda. Even here in Lusaka, we've had attacks on individuals. Two friends of mine, who are student refugee activists, were shot, one in the shoulder and one in the eye, some years back by Rwandan agents. In October last year, there was evidence that there was an attempt to kidnap five Rwandan leaders from Lusaka, including myself," he said with a wry smile and a chuckle. "We actually saw the etiquettes [protocols] they were supposed to be using. There have been numbers of people killed in Lusaka, we expect by Rwandan agents. We don't believe that things are actually improving at all."

Well into his 80s, nearly blind, and barely able to walk, Osmers may not seem a likely target for terrorist plots. But the bishop is widely revered within Zambia. Since he lost his left hand to a South African package bomb in 1979, many have considered him a living martyr. Though outwardly feeble, his voice rings out with clearness and conviction. Well over six feet tall, he carries himself with dignity.

"We have a wonderful faith," he said, "in the power of the risen Christ: going through all the darkness of rejection and torture and finally a brutal killing in the crucifixion and then to the glory of the resurrection.

"This gave me an invincible faith that, one day, apartheid would come to an end because it was a total system of racist discrimination, a crime against humanity. I see the same with Rwanda. I believe that change can come, and in the meantime we have to support those outside that country who need education, who need to find jobs, who need to become part, for the time being, of the Zambian nation."

Osmers uses connections forged across a lifetime of ministry to open new educational and job opportunities for refugees. He coordinates college scholarships for the children of Rwandan refugees, many of whom have lived all their lives in Zambia. Many of the Rwandan exiles were intellectuals at the time of the genocide. In contrast to the subsistence farmers who have formed the bulk of the refugees Zambia has welcomed from other crises in the region, the Rwandans highly value quality education. Their young people, however, do not qualify for the Zambian government's tuition grants.

Educational work has long been at the center of his ministry. As a parish priest in several African nations, he was a leader in the church schools movement and developed innovative catechetical programs. After an early retirement as Bishop of Eastern Zambia he served for several years as dean of St. John's Anglican Seminary in Kitwe, Zambia.

Today his efforts focus on securing funding for Rwandans to train as senior nurses, teachers, and physiotherapists. The refugee crisis in the Middle East has made this work more difficult, as many of his most important partners, especially the United Nations and the German government, have turned their attention elsewhere.

Born into a prominent New Zealand family, Osmers first came to Africa in 1958, his conscience fired by *Naught for Your Comfort*, an anti-apartheid exposé published two years earlier by Trevor Huddleston. Huddleston was an Anglican monk then working in Sophiatown, a black slum district in Johannesburg. Osmers spent time with Huddleston, seeing the effects of apartheid firsthand, and resolved to return to Africa after ordination to join the struggle.

He came to Lesotho at Huddleston's urging as a mission priest in 1965; he has lived on the continent ever since, "a refugee myself," he joked. In Lesotho, he served in rural parishes and as a leader in the Student Christian Movement, then an important force for justice activism. Suspicious of his work, the South African government banned

(Continued on page 25)

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# Zambian Girls Confront a Destroyer

By Mark Michael

A dozen girls dressed neatly in school uniforms chant a poem loudly, drowning out the cries of vendors from the ramshackle street market outside the open window:

Parents, parents please: take care of us.
We are not supposed to be married at such a young age!
Mum, dad: take care of us.
We do not need to get married at such a tender age!
I am early child marriage.
I am a destroyer.
I destroy all girls.
They think that they are nothing.
They are poor as it is.
People in high positions, watch out for me.
I am early child marriage.
I am dangerous.

They are the girls of Ng'ombe: 8, 9, 11, 12 years old. Some of the girls know firsthand about early child marriage, the destroyer. But at St. Matthias Community School, in the heart of the slum district in Lusaka, Zambia, they can be children again, with doors open to new opportunities.

"Child marriage is something that has been in place for a long time," said the Rev. Katete Jackson Jones, director of the Anglican Street Children's Program, which established the school in 2011. In communities like Ng'ombe, families sometimes arrange marriages between their young daughters to older men so there is one less mouth to feed in the household.

Jones said pregnancies in girls as young as 9 or 10 are commonplace in the community. Because their young bodies are often unable to deliver a baby, girls suffer devastating miscarriages or develop fistulae. Their husbands often abandon them, leaving the girls even more destitute.

Joseph Mwale, head teacher at St. Matthias, said he has rescued several girls from early marriages, returning them to their families and securing sponsors so that they may attend the school and count on a meal each day. Mwale also started the education and prevention program, and he wrote the poem that the girls have learned. He said he hopes that others in the community will hear its message.

Preventing early child marriage is an important goal throughout the Anglican Province of Central Africa, said the Rt. Rev. William Mchombo, Bishop of Eastern Zambia and the acting provincial secretary. Provincial officials have identified the end of gender-based violence as one of their primary goals. Programs like the one at St. Matthias that teach about the dangers of early child marriage help to protect some of the most vulnerable.

Mark Michael photo

St. Matthias Community School works to protect the childhoods and the future of students like these girls.

St. Matthias is one of three schools operated by the program to serve highly vulnerable children. In addition to girls rescued from early marriages, many of the students in the program's schools are orphans; some had been living on the street, begging, or selling drugs. Homeless children live with local church families. Sponsors provide funds for meals, tuition, school uniforms, and books. The program also provides recreation and educational support in three different Zambian towns, as well as an adult literacy program.

The program began in 1996, when the AIDS crisis had left unprecedented numbers of children living alone on the streets. The availability of AIDS anti-retrovirals has reduced the number of orphans, Jones said, but many AIDS patients are unable to work, and drug use is high in the community.

In communities like Ng'ombe the government-sponsored education system has been unable to keep pace with the growth in population. When St. Matthias School first opened, the child population of the district was 87,000, and there were only spots for 10,000 children in the state schools. "Our goal is to help the community where we are based," Jones said. "The best gift we can give to our community is education."

St. Matthias has grown to serve 330 children today. They attend in shifts, with four classes meeting in the morning and another four after lunch, all taught inside the dimly lit

open hall that doubles as a church on Sundays. Blackboards are painted on the side walls, and the pulpit serves for the head teacher's desk, the only one in the building. Parents help by carrying water to the school, which lacks a well, and some mothers assist the four teachers.

Plans for the school's future include installing a water system with toilets and building a larger complex. But other needs are more immediate, like repairs for the bus that was donated by Zambia's Japanese embassy to transport students from a more remote part of the district. Until funds can be found to put the bus back on the road, the affected children will need to walk great distances or stop attending school altogether.

The students gather for an assembly.

A long walk, though, cannot keep Dora Banda away from school. She walks over a kilometer from the one-room house she shares with her mother. At 16, she has attended St. Matthias since it opened. "The school has helped me to have knowledge and to learn to read and write," she said. Banda said she loves her teacher. Her friend Grace Tembo, 14, adds that she has also learned a great deal at St. Matthias and wants to become a journalist.

Mwale is proud of the progress his students have made; he said all of them passed the state exams last year. But he also gives thanks for the school's spiritual curriculum, which is the foundation of its work.

"We are standing on the Great Commission: go and teach in the world," he said. "We are telling them the Word of God, so they are children who know God and fear God and know what God wants them to do.

"My faith is boosted every day," he said, "and it has encouraged me to go on in my life with God."

Mwale said God gave him the opportunity to attend school. He was sponsored as a child to attend an Anglican school when his parents could not afford the fees. "Now I get to help other children get educated."

His faith may be moving him toward a different kind of teaching soon. Mwale has discerned a call to ministry and hopes to return to the classroom as a student. He hopes next year to study for the priesthood at St. John the Evangelist, the Anglican seminary in Kitwe. Mwale is certain, though, that much of his work as a priest will remain with vulnerable children in this land where the need is so great and so many lives are being changed.

*The Rev. Mark Michael is interim rector of St. Timothy's Church in Herndon, Virginia.*

# The Acts of St. Alban's in Strasbourg

By Sarah Hinlicky Wilson

Don Juel looked something like Ichabod Crane and something like the Fish Footman in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, but if ever anyone radiated with the beauty of the gospel, it was him. Presiding over Luke class at Princeton Seminary with ease, humor, and delight, he drew us through the seed parables as we flailed, trying to prove it was possible to make ourselves into good soil. Patiently and Socratically, he led us to the admission that soil is the most inert of things, incapable of making or remaking itself, and what were we going to do about that? And when at last we came to the inescapable conclusion, "nothing," the Holy Spirit moved in and started breathing life into these dead bones. Then we could see that all the "your faith has saved you" stories were not psychological directives for the religiously anxious but the supreme enactment of divine gift, within us and without us at once.

Good times. Don Juel was the one who gave me the Bible back after the contempt of long familiarity, and of course it didn't hurt that he was another of Princeton's small Lutheran minority (or "Lutheran mafia," as I once heard a Presbyterian professor snort). Ecstatic about Luke, ecstatic to see how Luther's profound reorientation of Christian theology was not a selective reading of Romans and Galatians alone but emerged from a much broader biblical narrative, I was equally ecstatic to remember that Luke had a sequel. I had only the vaguest memories of Acts — no surprise, since it was given short shrift in the lectionary of my youth — so with eager anticipation I set out to read volume two.

Oh no.

It was horrible. Where Luke was all mercy for the faltering, the paradoxical glory of the cross, and the transformation of suffering into new life, Acts was the most odious march of triumphalistic conquest. No ambiguity, no complexity, just one damned people after another slain by the Spirit. All those long-winded and pompous speeches. (Didn't Jesus warn about that? Oh, wait — in Matthew, not Luke.) It depicted a smooth path to success: and that sure didn't resemble any church I knew. And what was this works-righteousness nonsense in 10:35 about how "in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him"? I slammed the book shut and resolved to ignore Acts just as much the lectionary did.

Maybe I would have continued in this willful rejection, had not the Spirit slain me and my eisegetic misunderstandings. In a stroke of narrative genius worthy of Acts, the means by which my Acts-conversion came about perfectly matched the contents of Acts. Unsuspecting soil onto which seeds were flung, I moved to another country to start working in ecumenism.

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That country happened to be France, but as such it's incidental to the story, except perhaps as a place that it's hard for outsiders to integrate into. (Is any place easy for outsiders to integrate into?) My husband, Andrew, and son, Zeke, and I tried to make a go of it in a French church. We had delusions of a quick infiltration via linguistic immersion, and we were wrong. Frustrated and lonely, we finally heeded the positive reports coming back from visiting relatives whom we had packed off to St. Alban's, the Anglophone chaplaincy in our lovely city of Strasbourg. Feeling a bit like we were compromising our high ideals of assimilation, but at that point desperate for the fellowship of the gospel, we gave it a try.

Probably the first thing you are supposed to notice when you visit a church is its theology as enacted in liturgy, hymns, and preaching. But the first thing we noticed was that it was not a monochrome congregation. Since we are an interracial family, that was already thrilling. To be sure, there was the British contingent, as St. Alban's got its start about 40 years ago to tend the flock of diplomats at the European institutions in Strasbourg. For a while the Church of England's representative to the Council of Europe doubled as priest-in-charge of the chaplaincy. But there were other Europeans too, French and Italian and Irish and Lat-

"Each week at Communion we would all stand in a huge ring around the altar."

Sarah Hinlicky Wilson photos

vian. There was an extended Pakistani family. There were so many Nigerians! And so many Malagasy! And other Africans besides, from Ghana and Sierra Leone and Ethiopia and Zimbabwe. Even a handful of other North Americans like us.

And they got it. They knew as well as we did what it meant to be strangers in a strange land. They drew us in with a welcome that said: here, where nobody is at home, we are at home.

That international welcome worked ecumenically, too. Most members had some Anglican connection, but by no means all. Catholics and Baptists found a place at St. Alban's as much as those closer to Anglicanism on the Protestant spectrum. My Lutheran husband eventually became church warden, which we're pretty sure violates some canon law of the Church of England, but no one's going to pick on one of these far-flung outposts of the Diocese of Europe. (Anyway, the Hannover kings were Lutheran.)

Catholics and Baptists found a place at St. Alban's as much as those closer to Anglicanism on the Protestant spectrum.

But to get back to the point: what does any of this have to do with Acts? Since my earliest years I had been crazy excited to see the world. Other than driving through the most boring patch of Canada between New York and Michigan en route to see my grandparents, I didn't manage to leave the U.S. until I was 16, and my real travel career got launched only with my family's move to Slovakia when I was 17. Over college Christmases and summers home I added to my tally of European nations, and I spent one semester abroad. Andrew had been all over Latin America, with trips to Europe and Africa, too. When the chance arose for us to move to Strasbourg we needed barely ten minutes to say yes, and once we got there we gulped down each new wonderful city or hitherto unvisited country with gusto.

And yet, despite my 11 years of theological education, it had never once occurred to me that my thirst for foreign lands had the slightest thing to do with God.

If only I had paid better attention to Acts!

As it turns out, it wasn't even the colorful congregation of St. Alban's that sent me back to reread what I regarded as such a disagreeable book. It was my job. As a brand-new ecumenist, I was charged with the task of figuring out the world's 600 million Pentecostals for the world's 70 million Lutherans. My ignorance shielded me from any debilitating fears about what I was undertaking. Plus, I had the great fortune of making friends with fantastic Pentecostal scholars who gave me valuable pointers. It didn't take too long to realize that if I was ever going to figure out Pentecostalism, I had to figure out Acts first.

So, despite my theologically upturned nose, I plunged into Acts again. I didn't get it. I read it again. I still didn't get it. I was struggling with a particular puzzle: how to make sense of what Pentecostals said about the Holy Spirit and about baptism, and how that fit, or not, with what Lutherans (and Anglicans and Roman Catholics and Orthodox) said about the Holy Spirit and baptism.

That, as it turns out, is a-whole-nother story. But a crucial step toward solving the puzzle was to see how the first 19 chapters of Acts fulfill Jesus' command to bear witness "in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The drama centers on the reconciliation of all the peoples estranged from God.

Act One, as we'll call it, kicks off the story with the in-gathering of the Jews — no small irony that they had

(Continued on next page)


"They knew as well as we did what it meant to be strangers in a strange land."

(Continued from previous page)

to be gathered in at all. Following the Pentecostal eruption of the Spirit among the people Israel, the newly minted apostles witness and work miracles in and around Jerusalem. Despite the challenges they face, they're pretty comfortable on their home turf of Judea. They're not much inclined to move outward.

So, the Spirit takes advantage of the persecution after the stoning of Stephen to nudge them on to Act Two. Philip, father to four remarkable daughters and himself one of the seven deacons appointed to "serve tables," apparently defects from waiter duty to go slummin' in Samaria. Wonder of wonders, those part-time Jews, full-time-heretics believe the good news about Jesus. Peter and John check it out; it's the real deal. Then an almost-Jew — a proselyte eunuch from Ethiopia — begs for baptism. These cases, marginal though they may be, are somehow still within the blurry borderlands of Israel. Their inclusion causes anxiety but not crisis in the mother church of Jerusalem.

> A mixed community is not a natural thing, nor is it easy. But that's just it: a church is *not* a natural gathering.

Peter's dream of a picnic of unclean viands, preparing him for a visit to the unclean Roman centurion Cornelius, advances the drama to Act Three. Peter doesn't even get to finish telling his very Hebrew-centric tale ("in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem" he says in 10:39, as if emphasizing the story's irrelevance to Gentiles) before Cornelius and company are blasted with the Holy Spirit and start praising God in tongues. Even old Rockhead himself can't avoid drawing the inevitable conclusion: these guys have gotten the Holy Spirit just like we did, so I'd better baptize them, and quick.

At ground zero in Jerusalem, though, there's no joy over the new audience for Peter's preaching. Peter gets called out for his dalliance with Cornelius and ends up having to argue for a second Pentecost, this time for Gentiles instead of Jews, to justify his behavior. The brethren concede, a bit reluctantly. The matter blows up again a few chapters later when some folks go around teaching that you can't be saved without circumcision. The Church's very first council hashes it out and concludes: Gentiles are saved not by the keeping of the law but by the grace of Jesus Christ — and so are we Jews (15:10–11). How did a Lutheran like me miss *that* the first time around? From then on, all kinds of Gentiles are drawn into the salvation of Jesus. There's Lydia the purple merchant and her household, the Philippian jailer and his household, and Gentiles lurking about synagogues all over the eastern Mediterranean. Truly, in every nation God finds people who are acceptable to him, no works-righteousness about it!

The ingathering tale draws to a close in Act Four with the baptism of the Ephesian disciples — who had not yet heard of the upgrade from John the Baptist — in Jesus' name. With this event, every estranged community has been reconciled to the God of Israel through his Son, Jesus, if not yet every individual member of those communities. From chapter 19 onward, the locus of the action shifts to Paul's ever-tenser confrontations with the Roman authorities.

Reading and rereading Acts with this narrative arc in mind made what was so long opaque to me luminous — helped enormously by weekly worship at St. Alban's. Acts is not about a victorious stomp over outdated reli-

gions, Jewish or pagan. And it's *certainly not* a smooth ride without any conflicts, even if Luke probably did give a best-case-scenario version of events. Ananias and Sapphira lie about their generosity and are struck down dead. Simon Magus believes and gets baptized, and then tries to buy the Holy Spirit off the apostles. Paul has conflicts with John Mark, with Barnabas, with the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia — well, honestly, with just about everybody. And there are plots to kill around every corner. This, too, is a story marked by the cross.

The point of Acts is that the arms that were once stretched out on the cross will reach round the whole known world, and even farther, until every tribe, nation, and people comes to know in whose name salvation and forgiveness of sins are offered. The unfinished ending of Acts, rather like the unfinished ending of Mark, invites readers and hearers to fill in the blanks with their own repentance, faith, and witness.

Even the Jewish-only Pentecost of Acts 2 foreshadows this. The diaspora Jews gathered back in the homeland are from so many other nations by now that they have lost a common language. But the Spirit does not make them all able to speak the *same* language again; instead, the Spirit makes them all able to understand in their *new* native tongues. Ingathering does *not* mean homogenizing. It means finding out that exactly where you're not at home, you're home, because the temple of the Spirit travels everywhere.

A mixed community is not a natural thing, nor is it easy. It's hard enough to negotiate the conflicting communities of men and women that are inevitably found everywhere (Gal. 3:28), and integrating the socioeconomically diverse has been causing trouble ever since the love feasts of 1 Corinthians 11:18–22. So much the more so, then, where there is no common language, common culture, or common color to give some natural sense of mutual belonging.

But that's just it: a church is *not* a natural gathering. There's nothing wrong with such groupings of affinity per se, but they're not the church. Left alone, natural groupings will almost certainly turn tribal, suspicious, and violent. Leavened by the word of God and inhabited by the Spirit, however, they will learn to hallow daily life and family, work and food, for the enrichment of world and Church alike. It is indeed confusing, time-consuming, and costly to forge a Church out of the mixing of many nations. As Ephraim Radner observes, "The laws of mixing are Pentecostal in their gathering of tongues; they are also Golgathic in their cost" (*Leviticus*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible [2008], p. 215). We see that in Acts, and I learned it at St. Alban's. But in that very costliness we meet with the new creation that is the Church. Readers looking for a primer on the non-natural Church can do no better than Dietrich Bonhoeffer's classic *Life Together*.

It turns out that curiosity about the wider world and its peoples is not a personal predilection but a calling of the Holy Spirit to every Christian in every locale. The Church *is* all these nations gathered in, purified of parochialism in the waters of baptism. Participating in this costly mixing is not a privilege only of those living in globalized cities; a closer look at any human community shows that there are always outsiders living on the inside. Even such apparently alike communities as Norwegian and Swedish immigrants in the upper Midwest can find themselves called to struggle through the task of Pentecostal coexistence. I've heard the tales!

And this *is* at heart a theological task, not merely a civic one. It demands the continual recognition that we are not gathered around font, table, or word by the convenience of sociological similarity but by the Spirit urging us toward repentance and faith. That realization alone is enough to unmake and remake many a congregation. I had the joy of accompanying St. Alban's for a few years as it wrestled with this unmaking and remaking. And once I was able to repay my debts to the congregation by leading a Bible study on Acts, sharing the very wisdom I had learned from my time there.

Curiosity about the wider world and its peoples is not a personal predilection but a calling of the Holy Spirit to every Christian in every locale.

True, I wasn't always crazy about the hymns with their Victorian poetry and dragging melodies. And preaching to a theologian is a thankless task. But I'd have quibbles anywhere, and they are unworthy of the spiritual drama unfolding in worship. Each week at Communion we would all stand in a huge ring around the altar. As the body and blood were distributed, I'd make a point of looking around the circle, at each face and body, one by one, seeing the nations that the Spirit had already started gathering up in Acts; seeing the nations that will assemble around the Lamb in the New Jerusalem; seeing Christ's body, our people, my home.

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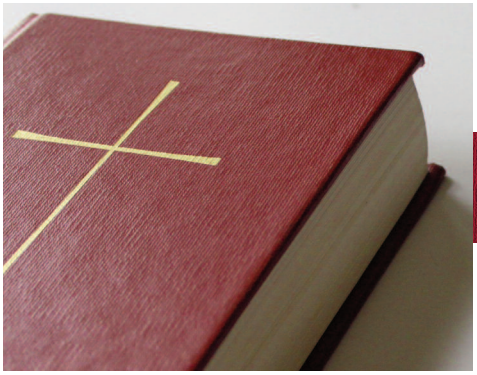

Necessary or Expedient?

A teaching series on prayer book revision

# Fresh and Familiar

By J. Neil Alexander

The 1979 Book of Common Prayer embodies the liturgical and sacramental thinking of the mid-1970s. To say that things have changed — in the world and in the church — might well be the understatement of the year. Such change will inevitably affect the way we pray, sing, worship, and celebrate sacraments.

Change, especially healthy change that builds community, is tethered in important ways to its source; it progresses while staying connected, it is fresh *and* familiar. That is my greatest hope and most significant concern about prayer book revision. Simply put: our prayer book needs updating and enrichment, but the book that replaces it must be recognizably ours. It must be a book that serves *the whole church*: stable, reliable, and deeply rooted in the liturgical frameworks of Anglicanism. At the same time, a new book must be elastic enough to meet the needs of non-traditional missional environments.

Prayer books in the Anglican tradition generally share a common body of content: the calendar of the Church year, the daily offices, liturgies for Christian initiation, for the Holy Eucharist and for ordination, plus the psalter. Most editions include pastoral rites for marriage, for the sick, and for burial. Whatever the details of a particular edition, Anglican prayer books have a recognizable shape. I hope we will not lose that.

This raises the question about what rites need to be in the prayer book and what rites need to be in auxiliary books authorized for use. We have often held that rites in the prayer book establish doctrine, whereas auxiliary rites are consonant with our theology and approved for pastoral use, but are understood to reflect rather than establish a theology and pastoral practice. Perhaps such a division is still a good place to begin the conversation.

As I think about revision, I find myself interested in something like BCP 1979: 2.0. I do not believe we need, nor is the church interested in, a wholesale revision in which everything is thrown out and we start from scratch. That's not a particularly Anglican approach, of course. We are not likely to abandon our inheritance and the prayers and rites we cherish and that shape our identity. We are much more likely to think in terms of evolving along a trajectory very much in line with the current book. While some tweaking is certainly in order, the structures of our principal rites are sound, flow beautifully, and wear well. Where they do not, the fix is relatively simple, non-jarring, and would be unnoticeable to most people.

Taking the Eucharist as an example, what would enrichment look like? We have three opening acclamations: for general use, for Lent, and for Easter. What about opening acclamations for Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Pentecost, and All Saints? These would follow the same structure, maintain the same ritual feel, but add a bit more seasonal variation. We have only two post-Communion collects in Rite Two; only one in Rite One. What if we kept them for general use, but added more seasonally specific post-Communion collects for the Christmas and Easter seasons?

In the Sunday assembly, among the most important things we do is pray. God's people intercede for the Church and for the world, for the sick and for those who have died. The 1979 book gives us great flexibility and encourages us to shape the prayers according to the needs and concerns of

the community at prayer, but in many parishes the models (Forms I-VI) have simply become the prayers *as is*, with little modification or enrichment. Perhaps the revision could provide stronger encouragement for eucharistic communities to shape their own intercessions and provide clearer guidance on how to do that well.

The rites of Christian initiation — baptism and confirmation, and the catechumenal processes that prepare for them — need refinement, mostly to make still more visible the centrality of baptism for Christian life and practice. The 1979 book took baptism out of the shadows as a custom of culture and repositioned it as the source from which flows the living water and spirit of Christian faith and discipleship. Our rites are strong and we should tinker with them cautiously, but some serious reflection on the structure of the baptismal rite — less the text, more the structure — might well yield richer fare sacramentally and pastorally.

Given recent decisions in the ecclesiastical and civil arenas, the marriage rite(s) will need thoughtful revision. Much of what is there is to be cherished and preserved, while broadening the scope to cover a wider field of familial constructs. Richer biblical and theological imagery is also needed to sustain those who make marital commitments.

Similarly, good work has been done in our church with respect to the burial rites. Collects, litanies, and prayers, particularly for use at the death of a child, and liturgical materials for use when one has died in particularly tragic circumstances, would be helpful enhancements. Again, the concern is for amplifying and enriching the rites, tweaking them, not replacing them.

The liturgies for Ash Wednesday, Palm/Passion Sunday, and the Paschal Triduum (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil) also need review. These rites continue to wear well in most contexts, but 40 years of pastoral use have given us a sense of where the weaker links in the ritual structures are, where they need to be abbreviated, and where in other places they need perhaps to be lengthened or enriched. Although the ritual "thickness" of the Holy Week rites is generally well balanced, some relatively minor emendations and optional additions might be considered.

The ordination rites came a long way in the 1979 revision. The realignment of our rites so that they are more consonant with the length and breadth of the catholic tradition has been a powerful change in a positive direction, but the effect of those changes has only begun to be understood among our bishops and those preparing for ordination. I worry that the progress we have made in the 1979 ordinal will be too quickly set aside without plumbing the depths of the history and theology that brought us where we are. We shall need to think again through the thorny theological issue of one or two ordination rites for deacons, permanent and transitional, and whether we are prepared to depart from today's ecumenical and catholic consensus by providing for direct ordination to the priesthood. The language of the ordinal, particularly the ordination of bishops, needs updating.

Speaking of language, updating our liturgical language will surely cause the church more heartburn. Finding the balance in language so that the new book can serve the widest possible swath of the church is going to be the hardest part of the task. Even after 40 years of Rite Two, a substantial group in our church still prefers traditional language as embodied in Rite One. Some prayers make us who we are, notably the eucharistic prayers of Rite One, that do not exist apart from their Rite One version. While I am confident I could spiritually survive if I never again attended a Rite One liturgy, the pastor in me would be loath to take away the possibility of traditional language from those eucharistic communities of our church that desire it. I would also hate to run the risk of losing so much of the Anglican choral tradition and the blessings of a traditional, fully sung Evensong.

While I could spiritually survive if I never again attended a Rite One liturgy, the pastor in me would be loath to take away the possibility of traditional language from those eucharistic communities of our church that desire it.

The language of Rite Two was, for much of the church, a highly successful updating of liturgical speech. It was carefully and thoughtfully done; while imperfect, it has worn pretty well for four decades. When compared to the modern language rites of other provinces of the Communion, its quality continues to stand out. That said, for many, the language of Rite Two is quite dated and needs to be revised, particularly with respect to gender-inclusive language. Many of us, myself included, would hope that a revision would mine the depths of Holy Scripture for even more expansive language for God.

That we need to revise and update the language of the prayer book is, for me at least, a given. What worries me, however, is that we will simply get into a war over pronouns, making uncritical substitutions, and flatten the range of meaning so that the highly rich, often intentionally ambiguous ritual language that feeds our souls will become narrow and pedestrian. The revision of the prayer book's language needs to be done, not by language activists, but by poets, writers, linguists, musicians, and theologians sensitive to the rich complexity of the ways we use words to pray.

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# Victorians and Missions

Review by Peter Doll

In the 20th century, histories of Christian mission in the Victorian era would have been written from a denominational basis and bias and would have been of little interest to secular historians. As Steven Maughan points out, "Missions as a subject have sat extremely poorly with liberal, pluralistic post-war academic cultures" (p. 16). Maughan's own weighty, detailed, and insightful study demonstrates why it is no longer possible for secular historians to ignore religious history.

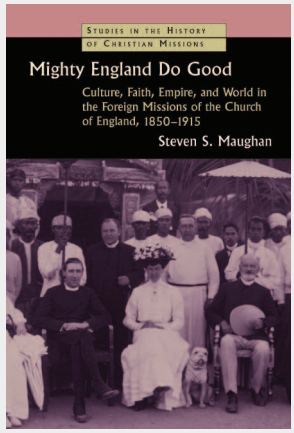
Alongside the English language and legal institutions and the rapacity of free-market capitalism, religion is the most lasting and global legacy of Britain and its empire.

In this period, contributions to missionary societies accounted for roughly a quarter of all British charitable giving; missionaries outnumbered the employees of the various colonial civil services four to one; missionary societies had a profound effect not only on religious institutions but also on national and imperial life more broadly. Alongside the English language and legal institutions and the rapacity of free-market capitalism, religion is the most lasting and global legacy of Britain and its empire. For those with contemporary denominational (here Anglican) interests, however, this topic remains of critical importance. If we want to understand the travails of today's Anglican Communion, then the world of Victorian missions is still recognizably the one that has made that Communion what it is today.

This is not a history of life in the mission field but rather an account of the development of and competition between the various mission societies of the Church of England, focusing particularly on the evangelical Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the high-church Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG). Domestic agendas and politics much more than local needs in the colonies drove the agendas and policies of the societies. As befits the era associated with the Darwinian survival of the fittest, competition, whether between evangelical and Anglo-Catholic or among evangelicals and High Churchmen of different stripes, drove missionary policy, popular engagement, and financial support.

As Archbishop Edward White Benson pointed out in 1894 to the Missionary Conference of the Anglican Communion: "The Societies are banded together upon principles. They engage enthusiasm; they even enlist fanaticism; and they have a very considerable power of bringing to bear the riches of rich men." As today, the drive to define and own Anglican identity and to exclude opponents sparked intense conflict, and the battle lines today are still shaped by whether given national churches inhabit formerly CMS or SPG "territory." Competition drove the measures of "success" of missionary endeavors, and the Communion today is still paying the price for that legacy.

Maughan is scrupulously even-handed in examining the strengths and weaknesses of high-church and low-church mission societies, whose fortunes waxed and waned throughout this period. He is also unconcerned to judge his subjects by politically correct present-day attitudes but allows them to speak for themselves, only employing quotation marks to acknowledge particularly dated ideas or modes of expression. The SPG, the older society and marked by a Constantinian assumption of the unity of Church and State, was particularly committed to "white settlement colonies" and showed a greater willingness to associate itself with colonial authorities and the imperial idea. The CMS from its origins was particularly committed to "tropical" colonies and even regions beyond British control where it sought to evangelize the "perishing heathens." The CMS was numerically and financially more successful, but the SPG was more influential in the corridors of establishment power. Evangelicals associated personal freedom and responsibility with free-trade arguments in both the spiritual and economic realms, while High Churchmen and Anglo-Catholics emphasized an interdependent social hierarchy and communalism. Both societies recruited intensively in the universities, but the CMS was more effective among "muscular Christians," the SPG among scholars.




**Mighty England Do Good**
Culture, Faith, Empire, and World in the Foreign Missions of the Church of England, 1850-1915
By **Steven S. Maughan**
Eerdmans. Pp. 527. $45

Significant as the differences between the societies were, Maughan excels in exploring the ways in which

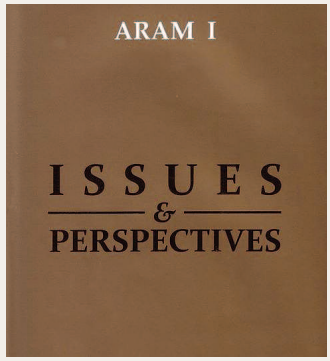
both evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics addressed in parallel but distinctive ways the challenges thrown up by political, social, and intellectual developments. Each responded positively, for example, to the growing desire of women to serve God in responsible roles independent of male control. The evangelical "holiness" movement recognized that the Holy Spirit infused and called believers regardless of gender, and the CMS ultimately employed more women than men in the mission field, though always without equality of responsibility or recognition. High-church women found outlets for their vocations in the burgeoning monastic communities that rapidly became an essential component of Anglo-Catholic missions at home and abroad. All these women were subject to suspicion and opposition for their challenge to patriarchal control in church and society. Likewise, mission societies all struggled with the tension between their assumptions of the superiority of the British "race" and "civilization" to that of native peoples and their perfectly genuine desire to establish indigenous and locally governed churches.

This study can be extremely dense and dry, though this may simply be the price for its being so theologically, socially, and culturally nuanced. Although Maughan is describing a world in many ways far removed from our own, it still has the capacity to surprise us with its intense familiarity. Christians then, as now, were struggling to understand and live out their faith in times of profound social and technological development; they lived with the same tension between a desire to adapt to change but also to be loyal to the faith once delivered. The World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 was said to be dominated by the themes of modern "scientific efficiency" and "spiritual power."

The same aspirations might be said to undergird the Church of England's current bureaucratic campaign for Reform and Renewal. Its critics, however, do indeed echo the words of Ralph Wardlaw Thompson in a post-Edinburgh lament: 'We have gone in for business methods but have dropped overboard silently and with some shame the great policy of faith in God." It is paradoxically both a depressing fact and a sustaining comfort to be reminded that, as Christians and as human beings, we have an unfortunate tendency not to learn from history, but to make for ourselves the same mistakes, over and over again.

*The Rev. Canon Peter Doll is canon librarian at Norwich Cathedral.*

Issues and Perspectives
By His Holiness, **Aram I**
Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia.
Pp. 22.
Prices vary for used copies
(bit.ly/2cu0v5z)




# A Bold and Generous Vision

Review by Caleb Congrove

The essays collected in *Issues and Perspectives* range far and free, from questions in systematic theology to persons and topics in the history of the Armenian Church and people, ecumenism, the role of religion in the public life of pluralist societies, the present reality of Christians in the Middle East, and Christian dialogue with Islam. These issues represent lasting and urgent interests for His Holiness, Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, one of the centers of ecclesial unity and leadership within the Armenian Apostolic Church. Catholicos Aram is a theologian, writer, and dedicated ecumenist. Involved in many regional and international ecumenical bodies, he served two terms as moderator of the World Council of Churches from 1991 to 2005.

For most readers, Aram I's historical essays will likely serve as an introduction to his church and its tradition. One is about St. Gregory of Narek, the 10th-century monastic theologian and poet, whom Pope Francis recently added to the list of distinguished teachers venerated by the Roman Catholic Church as doctors of the Church.

Another essay, "A Culture of Dialogue," discusses historic Cilicia, a medieval Armenian state established outside of Armenia and the origin of his catholicosate. More than a lost past to be lamented, however, the Catholicos of Cilicia finds in this "first organized Armenian diaspora" a model for lived pluralism, dialogue, and tolerance.

Perhaps all that most Western readers will know about Armenian history is the genocide, the destruction a century ago of Armenian and other Christian minorities in the name of Turkification. Though one essay is devoted to the genocide, the voice of Aram I is not mournful, timid, or back-

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ward-looking. The church never appears as an insular ethnic minority, nor one inwardly focused on its own survival. The essays in *Issues and Perspectives* are permeated by a bold and generous vision of engagement.

This book speaks to Westerners in a Christian voice that is distinctively and unmistakably Middle Eastern. Several essays address the situation of the Christian minority in the region and its uncertain future there. Though Christians in the Middle East have lately attracted much Western interest and concern, Middle Eastern Christians rarely figure as interlocutors and interpreters of their situation. Much of what Aram I has to say will ring new to Western ears.

Dialogue with Islam, for example, only beginning to occur to some in the West, is uniquely urgent for him (see especially "Living as Community with Islam"). In several important essays, especially "The Future of Christianity in the Middle East" and "The Arab Spring and the Christian Communities," he urges Christians to move from isolation to engagement and to play their part in shaping a more democratic and pluralistic future for the Middle East. A few years later, this call to engagement and risky solidarity seems even more remarkably bold. But the exhortation was never naïve about the dangers. Many of his recommendations for the churches of the region — internal renewal, a more unified witness, and more organized collaboration both with Western churches and diaspora communities in the West — seem no less true, even if a hopeful future now seems in many places less likely. "Unity is accomplished by being together, reflecting and acting together, and serving and witnessing together in faithfulness to the command of Christ," he writes (p. 146). Finally, for Aram I, though the future is admittedly uncertain, the Christian mission is not.

Opening and underlying the whole collection is a resounding insistence on the Church's universal and evangelistic mission. ("Rediscovering the *Missio Dei*: A Call to the Churches"). For Aram I, *mission* is central to both the identity and being of the Church. Without its universal and evangelical mandate, the Church loses its purpose and cause for being: "The church does not exist for itself; it exists for a mission entrusted to it by God in Christ. The church is sent into the world; its mandate is to take Christ to the world and announce the restoration of the Kingdom of God (Mt 28:19-20)" (p. 14).

Intrinsically directed outward, the Church is ordered to the proclamation of the gospel to the ends of the earth. The Church's work is not properly her own but the *missio Dei*, the saving and transformative mission of God. Accordingly, mission cannot be an appendage or arm of the Church and its activity, but must be its core identity. When Christians focus on self-preservation or even on merely extending or propagating their ecclesial communities, the true mission and identity of the Church is obscured. In this account, both ethnic and confessional identifications can confuse the Church's true mission, obscuring or even threatening to replace the *missio Dei*.

When Christians focus on self-preservation or even on merely extending or propagating their ecclesial communities, the true mission and identity of the Church is obscured.

Likewise, the catholicity of the Church points to the mystery of salvation, God's work to redeem the whole creation in Jesus Christ ("Catholicity: Its Implications and Imperatives"). Much more than a mark, catholicity is the Church's being because Jesus Christ is the whole and unique truth and because salvation in him is announced to the whole cosmos. Integrity in Christ is conferred through the Church's authentic witness to the salvation God has revealed in him: "the more the Church goes beyond itself, the more it becomes truly itself; the more the Church engages in *missio Dei*, the more catholicity acquires its genuine meaning and articulation" (pp. 33-34).

Despite the unmistakably and unapologetically ecumenical commitment of these essays, *Issues and Perspectives* offers relatively little reflection on the progress of the theological dialogues that have taken place between the several families of Middle Eastern Christians. Rather, it is in this larger context of shared mission and witness that unity is to be pursued and divi-

sions among Christians are to be overcome: "The catholicity of the church is a constant reminder that the churches must go beyond the framework of ecclesial unity and endeavor for the unity of humankind. God's gift of unity and catholicity in Christ was a response to the broken world. The world is still — if not more — broken" (p. 29).

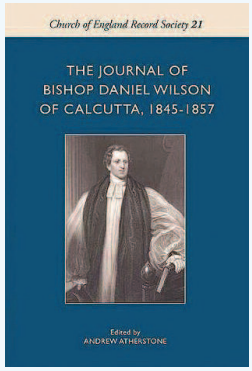
The volume's final chapter is not an essay. "Notes from my Ecumenical Diary" is a collection of observations, remarks, and questions gleaned from decades of experience as an ecumenist and pastor. As Aram I writes: "From an early age, while reading, traveling or attending meetings I have been an avid note taker. My notebook has accompanied me throughout my pastoral and ecumenical journey since 1968" (p. 183). These notes offer concerns, challenges, and questions in pithy entries. Some are programmatic, about the direction of the ecumenical movement, its institutions, and dialogues. Others linger on the experience of the author's ecumenical work: "To stand in the pulpit of another church, to preach in a language that is not yours and to address a foreign congregation are unique experiences that one can gain only through the ecumenical movement" (p. 190).

This offering of notes is personal, a gift and an invitation. They do not mount or propose an argument or a point of view, but rather share aloud his thoughts. They invite us to reflect further, to share in the commitments and motivations that have been the responsibility and dedication of his labors. But perhaps more than anything else, they represent a kind of legacy or bequeathal: "I hope that these notes will challenge the youth to engage in interchurch and interfaith relations, dialogue and collaboration with a sense of profound responsibility and committed dedication" (p. 183). Present and future ecumenists will profit from reading them.

*Caleb Congrove is a high-school teacher in Ohio and a contributor to TLC's weblog,* Covenant.

# Recovered Treasure

Reviewed by Richard J. Mammana




## The Journal of Bishop Daniel Wilson of Calcutta, 1845-1857

Edited by **Andrew Atherstone**. Boydell Press for the Church of England Record Society. Pp. lii + 373. $120

Daniel Wilson (1778-1858) is a major — now mostly forgotten — figure in the history of 19th-century Anglicanism. As the fifth Bishop of Calcutta and first Metropolitan of India and Ceylon, he worked tirelessly as a missionary bishop, administrator, educator, and prolific author for more than 25 years from his consecration in 1832 to his death in Calcutta in 1858. His work in laying foundations for the life of what are now independent provinces or extra-provincial dioceses of the Anglican Communion in India, Bangladesh, Burma, and Sri Lanka is significant, as are his pioneering efforts to address inequalities in human rights fostered by the Indian caste system and its designation of "untouchables."

This important new book, the annual volume for 2016 of the Church of England Record Society, is called Wilson's "private memoranda," which he wrote "for the eye of my children and of my successor only." Just one manuscript volume of Wilson's journals survives, covering the period from 1845 to 1857. We know that earlier volumes from 1797 to 1807, and from 1830 to 1845, are almost certainly lost, making this publication all the more important.

Wilson was a firm evangelical Anglican who considered it "THE DUTY OF DUTIES" (his capitalization) for English Christians to convert non-Christian residents of the Indian subcontinent from Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism to Anglicanism. Following the experience of an evangelical awakening at the age of 17, Wilson associated himself closely with the Clapham Sect, a group of lay and ordained Church of England evangelicals who included such figures as Charles Simeon, Henry Venn, William Wilberforce, and Hannah More. Before his consecration, he was a founder in 1831 of the Lord's Day Observance Society to promote the keeping of the Sabbath, and the vicar of St. Mary's Church, Islington, a center of Anglican evangelical piety and organization.

Several consistent trends emerge in the 13 years of Wilson's journal: an almost visceral abhorrence for Tractarianism — he called John Keble's writings "Noodleism" — coordinated closely through regular communication with evangelicals in the British Isles; the steering of a careful middle and neutral way between the missionary activities of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (traditionally High Church) and the Church Missionary Society (traditionally evangelical) in India; and the repetitive application of Wilson's high spiritual standards to himself as he examines his own adherence to his calling.

Along the way, Wilson records travel throughout Southeast Asia and furlough in England, his attention to opium-addicted colonial chaplains, problems arising in marriages between European-descended Anglicans and Indian converts, the separate worship of Anglo-Indians and indigenous Indians, discrepancies in pay between Indian clergy and Anglo missionaries, and regular reflections about current reading matter, weather, and financial expenditures.

Wilson's work today survives primarily in the life of institutions he founded directly: St. Paul's Cathedral, in modern Kolkata; Bangladesh's Dhaka College; and former English churches he consecrated in cities as disparate as Rangoon, Uttarakhand in northern India, and Colombo. Thanks to the good work of Andrew Atherstone at Oxford's Wycliffe Hall, we have in print now for the first time the personal writings of a leader who served as the public face of the Church of England at a critical period in the globalization of Anglicanism.

*Richard J. Mammana is the archivist of the Living Church Foundation and a member of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is a parishioner and vestry member at Trinity Church, New Haven, Connecticut.*

EDITORIAL

# Confession Precedes Healing

"Fear, mistrust, and resentment": this is how the consulting firm Human Synergistics described the workplace atmosphere of 815 Second Avenue, New York — the Episcopal Church Center.

The firm presented a summary report of its survey of Church Center staff to the House of Bishops during that body's fall meeting in Detroit. Members of the House of Deputies and reporters heard the report via webcast. TLC correspondent G. Jeffrey MacDonald was among those to stream the hearing, and thus became a bearer of bad news: "Staff find it difficult to maintain personal integrity while working for the national church" (more on p. 4).

These are not words we like to hear. Nor do we like knowing that senior administrators in the church — Sam McDonald and Alex Baumgarten — engaged in misconduct grievous enough to warrant termination. While human institutions surely fail to deliver perfection, as Presiding Bishop Michael Curry pointed out during the report, the Church must be held to a higher standard (see Matt. 5:48). We commend Bishop Curry for facing this challenge head on, for bringing in outside experts, and for calling us to follow the way of Jesus. Curry described the problems at the Church Center as "deeply cultural and spiritual" and said he would have needed to address them, even if the misconduct scandal had never occurred.

Since the scandal broke last year, THE LIVING CHURCH has endeavored to report on this matter both diligently and carefully. A great deal of secrecy surrounds the nature of the misconduct; thus far, no one has gone on the record to discuss it. The presiding bishop's report on the misconduct, published in April, indicated that executives "violated established workplace policies and … failed to live up to the church's standards of personal conduct in their relationships with employees, which contributed to a workplace environment often inconsistent with the values and expectations of the Episcopal Church."

While official reports and updates on the matter have spared certain details, they have bluntly described the dysfunction at 815 Second Avenue in recent years. Missing, however, is the language of sin.

St. John teaches that God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world but save it (John 3:17), and precisely on that count our Lord urges us to "bear fruits worthy of repentance" (Luke 3:8). If, therefore, "we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9). With all other Christians, Episcopalians confess their sins, repent of sinful behavior, and seek reconciliation with those they have harmed.

As Bishop Curry says, it is time to "return to who we are." But while he contends that the church's problems are cultural and "not primarily organizational or structural," surely culture, spirit, structure, and organization are inextricably intertwined in the church. Just so, our church, and all churches, should function as Christian institutions. Admitting that a sub-Christian environment took root may be a vital step in repentance.

We would be remiss if we did not confess our own sins in this matter. As an independent publication devoted to the flourishing of the Episcopal Church, we failed to take meaningful notice of the disappointing environment that was developing. Staff at the Church Center are colleagues and friends, and we lament and confess our sins of ignorance and silence.

At TLC we may lack the investigative resources of secular news magazines and metropolitan newspapers, but we strive to depict the church truly in everything we do. Like the Episcopal Church, we have some improvements to make.

## Bishop with a Refugee's Spirit

(Continued from page 10)

him from entering the country in 1970, a restriction that was not lifted for more than 20 years.

After the 1976 Soweto Uprising, anti-apartheid advocates fled South Africa *en masse*, and some resettled near his parish in Lesotho. "I was helping them with education, and with their meetings, and with international help," he said. His assistance to the ANC members, as well as his criticism of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa's decision to support chaplains in the defense force, drew the hostility of the South African Bureau of State Security. Security operatives planted a bomb in a package of ANC literature sent to his home in 1979. It exploded as he opened it, taking his left arm.

Osmers went on the offense after the attack, making an extensive tour of his native New Zealand to speak against the apartheid system, waving his stump of an arm as a symbol of the regime's brutality. He was not allowed back into Lesotho, and was forced to abandon his parish and his many friends, an experience he recalled as "very traumatic."

He relocated to Lusaka, where he worked even more closely with ANC leaders who had flocked to the capital, a widely known haven for African freedom fighters. There he led what he called "two separate lives." He presided at Cathedral of the Holy Cross on Sundays, while secretly serving as chaplain to the ANC's senior leadership. If Anglicans served as chaplains to the South African regime, he reasoned, the case for praying for the liberators must be just as strong.

Soon Osmers was reposted to Molepolole, Botswana, where he was the only member of the ANC not in hiding. He served there until 1988, when he had to flee a death squad sent by South Africa's Bureau of State Security. He had just three hours' notice and escaped with only a small bag of clothes.

He returned to Zambia, where he is widely regarded as a hero. He was elected bishop of the new Diocese of Eastern Zambia in 1995. He accepted the position only with great reluctance and retired six years later to allow a native Zambian to succeed him.

Osmers was named a Commander of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2007 for his services to the anti-apartheid movement. During the Anglican Consultative Council's meeting in Lusaka, the Most Rev. Thabo Makgoba, Archbishop of Cape Town, honored him with the Archbishop's Award for Peace for his "lifelong work as a faithful servant of God." He is the subject of *A Helping Hand*, a South African Broadcasting Co. documentary from 2012.

"The life of faith is very challenging," Osmers said. "When we look at Christ, who comes to us in our neighbor, in unexpected people and places, meeting us in the needs of others, it's not enough to be giving care. One needs to be attacking injustice in a systematic way. … We have to work with others, encourage others, learn from others, as we work for Christ's justice, freedom, and truth."

*(The Rev.) Mark Michael*

## Oxford Calls Justyn Terry

The Very Rev. Justyn Terry will become the dean of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, in October. He will work two days a week until the new year, when he devotes full time to the role.

"Justyn has, for the past eight years, been dean and president of Trinity School for Ministry, in the wonderfully named Ambridge USA, so he brings an extraordinary wealth of experience to this new job," said Michael Lloyd, Wycliffe Hall's principal.

"I am thrilled at this appointment, and am looking forward with great excitement to working with Justyn. His outstanding gifts will help Wycliffe provide women and men with the best possible training for a lifetime's service of God. Please do pray for Justyn and Cathy and their daughters, Sophia and Lydia, as they adjust to life back in the U.K."

*Wycliffe Hall*

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SUNDAY'S READINGS | 22 Pentecost, October 16

**First reading and psalm**: Jer. 31:27-34 • Ps. 119:97-104
**Alternate**: Gen. 32:22-31 • Ps. 121 • 2 Tim. 3:14-4:5 • Luke 18:1-8

# The Heart

A sower goes out to sow, throwing the seed of human flourishing and the secret code of animal diversity, planting and building a divine-rich world (Jer. 31:27-28). Among emerging mysteries known and unknown, the human heart is, if not the greatest, an inexhaustible depth nonetheless. In the flesh of a heart, the flutter of valves, and the pressure of blood, God is writing the Word. The Word became flesh in the flesh of a human heart. There a law is written in the red ink of a Christ-river yet running from the hill of Calvary.

"Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all day long. … your decrees are my meditation" (Ps. 119:97-99). I keep your precepts and your word, sense the sweet taste of divine speech, the thick honey of understanding and instruction (Ps. 119:103-04). In the balance between human work and divine agency, God makes the first move, travels along the currents of human freedom, which are not truly free apart from God, and then directs the whole story to its proper end. The heart is pure and sees God. Humans are called to love and meditate over the divine Word. We keep the Word. The much greater divine work, however, is hidden. "The Lord is your keeper; … The Lord will keep you from all evil; … The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore" (Ps. 121:5-8).

God will do what he will do, lovingly and unfailingly. What are we to do? We are to "continue in what we have learned and firmly believed" (2 Tim. 3:14). We are to lean over the sacred writings: reading, listening, comparing, memorizing, and imagining. We are to go on in clear sobriety, endure hardship, announce the good news, and carry on in all such good words as we have been prepared to walk in (2 Tim. 4:5). "Pray always and do not lose heart," Jesus says. Ideally, Christ is cultivated in the heart always, everywhere, and by all. Personally and collectively this requires discipline.

We meditate and study, taste the word and digest its meaning, ruminate on details and rest in the divine presence, render service to our neighbors, pray in private and among the faithful, all to carve out a space, larger and deeper, where Christ may be. And to this story there is no end. Our capacity for Christ may and should deepen both now and into the hidden depths of eternity. The heart ever expands.

Consider Augustine: "At certain internals of hours and seasons we beseech God with words, so that we may admonish ourselves by the signs of these things [what we have recited], and may know how much progress we have made in this desire, and we may inspire ourselves to increase in it. The more fervent the desire, the more worthy the fruit" (Epistle 130 *Ad Probam*; my translation). This is not about informing or convincing God. Rather, "The Lord wants our desire to be exercised in our prayers so what we are prepared to receive what he is prepared to give."

Do not worry. God knows what you need and is ready to give it. Christ is your need and your heart his home. Let him make a mansion there moment by moment.

## Look It Up

Read Ps. 119. A long meditation on the Law and the Word.

## Think About It

Broken and contrite hearts are open. Grateful hearts are open. Generous hearts are open. The kingdom of Christ is within you.

**First reading and psalm**: Joel 2:23-32 • Ps. 65
**Alternate**: Sir. 35:12-17 or Jer. 14:7-10, 19-22 • Ps. 84:1-6 • 2 Tim. 4:6-8, 16-18 • Luke 18:9-14

# Resident Alien

In a parish church that can seat no more than 40 people and that feels mostly full and robust with 18 souls, there is from the moment of arrival and personal greetings to the tolling of the bell and the liturgy and the supper to follow a deep sense that each person is a beloved child of God. Collectively, these are the children of Zion (Joel 2:23-32). "I will pour out my spirit on all flesh" (Joel 2:28). For so long this was a hope and promise, until the promise became flesh and dwelt among us, until the promise became indwelling Spirit, making life itself and resurrection the solid core of a Christian life. "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20).

This meeting of souls is a divine and human transaction. The Spirit is poured out on all flesh, and to you [God] all flesh shall come" (Joel 2:28; Ps. 65:2). "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20 KJV). The tone is remarkable and palpable where Christ is: Joy and gladness and the early rain, the full harvest and vats of crushed grapes and olives, plenty and satisfaction, the long and eternal life of a living Lord among these frail human beings (Joel 2:23-26). This is the house of God, the holy temple (Ps. 65:4). "How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!" (Ps. 84:1). Only 18 people in attendance and yet the river of God is full and the grain plenty (Ps. 65:9).

Then the end comes. The blessing is announced, the dismissal given, kind words shared, belongings gathered, and then the road back home. Still, the grace of the gathering, the real presence, is carried into the street; like a small Christ on the shoulder of St. Christopher, the disciple and the Lord are one: one in the temple and one at home.

Once upon a time there was a man who "went down to his home justified" (Luke 18:14). He is remembered for his humility, but little notice is given to those striking words, "he went down to his home." He went up to the temple to pray, and then he went home. A demoniac, having been healed by Jesus, wants to follow him. But Jesus says: "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you" (Mark 5:19). Again and again Jesus enters a home.

It is no small thing to live where Christ is. The mind of Christ is huge and expansive. It feels and sees portents in the heavens and on the earth, greets morning and evening as gateways to God, feels the soft rain and the bliss of growth (Joel 2:30; Ps. 65:8-9). And yet the mind of Christ, the one who yet bears his scars, is not afraid of pain. He bears it with all the compassion and cost of his agony and death. The river of God is full of water and blood (Ps. 65:10; John 19:34). Christ flows into and completes and elevates all happiness, all gladness, all rejoicing. He is also a consoling balm, the inner advocate, a replay of love and hope. In a small room, with the door shut, alone, and yet alone is never alone. Christ is the deep breath of being.

Christ makes a nest in the temple. He is there, irrevocably there. He is also at "the earth's farthest bounds," in a home, wherever it is (Ps. 65:8).

## Look It Up

Read Matt. 18:20

## Think About It

"Where are you staying?"

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(Continued on next page)

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